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For the Worshipful,

Mr. Steel the Recorder of London.

TO BE

Communicated to the rest of the Bench or  
Goal-Delivery at *Guild-hall*:  
These with speed,

Mr. Recorder,

**Y**our Profession being a Lawyer, and as you are Recorder of London, you are often the mouth of the Court in *Old-Bayly*, and have several days been so in my case; and as I hear, you are like to be so again upon Wednesday next: In which consideration I judge it the most proper for me in my present condition to write unto you, and to acquaint you, that I made *Moses* the mouth of God, charging the Judges of *Israel*, that they shall hear the causes between their brethren, and judge righteously betwixt every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him: *Ye shall not, saith he, respect persons in judgement, but ye shall hear the small as well as the great, you shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgement is Gods*, Deut. 1. 16, 17. and in Deut. 16. 18, 19, 20. they are expressly commanded to do that which is altogether just, that they may live long, and inherit the Land which the Lord hath given them.

And saith the wise man by the Spirit of God, *Prov. 28. 4. A Laid is established by Judgement.*

2<sup>d</sup>, by the Law of England, I know you know a Judges Office, and a Prisoners right by Law; and according to Law, you have, as my right, assigned me Counsel, to fit my self to plead matter of Law for my life.

Yet while I am a pursuing my business according to your late Order at the Sessions, and am peaceable and quiet in my imprisonment, and neither endeavoring to make an escape, or any way quarrelling with my fellow prisoners, or my Keepers: I am by Capt. *Dike* the Keeper of Newgate, served with an Order in these words:

A

Tuesday

Tuesday the second of August, 1653.

**O**rdere*d* by the Parliament, That Lieutenant Colonel John Lilburne be kept close Prisoner, and that the Keeper of Newgate do take care the same be done accordingly.

Henry Scobel, Clerk of the  
Parliament.

Upon which Order the said Mr. Dike was pleased to take upon him to render such an interpretation of it, as I dare presume my head to a farthing toaken, that is no way warranted by the Law of England, in any kinde whatsoever; (*viz.*) That I must be such a close Prisoner, as that he must keep all my friends from me, and he and his under Keeper with strictness haue accordingly executed it ever since; although truly, I cannot in reason and charity believe, that the Parliament themselves by the said Order intend any such thing, because in their late Declaration of the 12 of July last, and the second page thereof, they declare, *That they will demean themselves in all things, as becometh those who are set by God for the good of all, and in all, to be as tender of the lives, estates, liberties, just rigors and properties of all others, as we are (say they) of ourselves and posterities.* But if this close restraint of mine from the visits of my Friends, Lawyers, Attorneys, Solicitors, or Messengers to go up and down about my affairs, be their intentions by the said Order, I must not only avert their said Order to be against all the declared Laws of Liberties and Freedom in England, against the Rules of Justice amongst Heathens, Pagans and Tyrants, but against the very tenor of their own foresaid promises, and thereby themselves rendered to be men void of faith or truth, whose solemn words and promises are not in the least to be regarded, should it be supposed that such an interpretation by their consent, so contrary to Law, should be rendered of their foresaid Order, as to keep me close Prisoner from speaking with my Friends, Counsellors, Solicitors or Messengers, when I am upon tryal for my life.

Sure I am, the late Parliament in the purest of their days, before they were corrupted and debled, in their grand and first Remonstrance of December, 1641. complains of such close imprisonment, acted upon my self and several others by the late King and his Ministers, as the actions of most barbarous injustice, oppression and tyranny, as you may read in the first part of the Parliaments Books of Declarations, page 8. although neither my self then, nor any of my there mentioned fellow sufferers, were then in the least upon tryal for our lives, when such close restraint as is there complained of was exercised upon us; neither were any of us there in that Declaration

ration mentioned, in the least condemned by the said King, or his Male Administrators of Justice, with our some Process of Law, even in unbecomings; as I have been for Felony by the late Parliament without any process of Law at all, if the Act of Banishment upon which you strongly endeavor to take away my life, should concern me in the least.

And sure I am, the then Parliament or House of Commons, upon the fourth of May 1641. voted such unjust close imprisonment, and other the like illegal proceedings against me (which yet never reached to any sentence for the loss of life) to be not only illegal, but also bloody, wicked, cruel, barbarous and tyrannical, and that I ought to have reparations there ore.

And sure I am, at the Tryals of *Stratford, Canterbury, Hamilton or Capel*, and that for Acts of the highest of Treasons, the late Parliament never exercised any such close imprisonments upon them, as is now done upon me.

And also sure I am, that although I was taken as a Prisoner of War, fighting most resolutely against the King, and carried from *Brandford* a Prisoner to *Oxford Castle*, and there at one time sufficiently cured from him by the present Earl of *Kinghorne*, the late Earl of *Arundel*, the Lord *Dunmore*, and the Lord *Andover*, to all whose allurements and threats I sufficiently held out and avowed flag of defiance and scorn, upon which I was laid in Irons, and kept close Prisoner from the visits of my friends, which when I came before Judge *Heath* for a tryal for my lie at the common Law, and complained of the aforesaid usages as against Law: he justly acknowledged them to be so, and immediately at the Bar ordered me present release from them both, which I legally enjoyed, and thereby had an opportunity presently to post away a Letter to Mr. *Lenthall* the Speaker of the Parliament, another to young Sir *Henry Vane*, and a third to my wife, which said Letters produced a Declaration from the Lords and Commons of the 17 of December 1652, printed in the first part of their Books of Declarations, page 802. that insurrectionally then saved my life.

And sure I am, that the Apostle *Paul* was accused by his most malicious adversaries, of higher things then any is pretended to be laid unto my charge, even to be a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition among the Jews throughout the world, and a Ring leader of the Sect of the Nazarens, yet his Heathen Roman Judges examined the matter legally, and strictly, and expressly, notwithstanding the said grievous accusation, ordered *Pauls* Keeper or Jaylor, to let him have liberty: and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him, *Acts* 24. 18, 21. v. 2. when upon his Appeal to *Cesar* as Supreme (the Liberty of the famous Commonwealth of *Rome* by *Julius* and *Augustus Caesar* being lately overthrown and subdued) he came to *Rome*, the grand Tyrant Nero being, as I judge, by his expressions in his Epistle to the *Philippians*, the present

sent Emperor, permitted *Paul* to dwell two whole years in his own hired house, and to receive all with freedom, without the least restraint, that came unto him, *Acts 28, 30.*

Sir, as my undoubted right by Law, you assigned me Counsel to sit me with a plea to preserve my life at this next Sessions: and yet the Jaylor of your Court deprives me of all the means that tends to that end. And so deals as bad with me, as the old Tyrant *Pharaoh* dealt with the poor Israelites, when he made them make brick without straw; for which hard and cruel bondage, they sighed and groined unto the Lord, and he gloriously delivered them, to the destruction of *Pharaoh*, and all his cruel Tyrannical enslaving Task-masters: Wherefore Sir, I cannot do less in conscience to the welfare of my own life, and the Nations liberties and freedoms, then to demand of you upon sight and knowledge hereof, your Order, as I had from Judge *Heath* (who was stiled and called a Traytor Judge at *Oxford*) to deliver me from my present illegal, unjust and tyrannical restraint (in my hard and unquiet imprisonment) from speaking with my Friends, Counsel, Solicitors and Messengers; or else the great and mighty God of heaven and earth judge betwixt you and me, and all the rest of your Associates, that with force and violence, without all shadow or pretended colour of Law or Justice, pursue the last drop of my innocent blood, and so I rest,

*A Faithful and true hearted Englishman,*

**John Lilburne,**

*From my barbarous and Tyrannical  
Imprisonment this 8. of Aug.  
1653.*

I have by a private hand sent this to some of my friends to deliver to you, and be witnesses of your Answer.

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**FINIS.**

